

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of December 20, 2007 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. However, the Examiner is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Claims Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 1-6, 8, 10-11, and 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. More specifically, it was asserted in the Office Action that the limitations of "a PSTN-based teleconferencing system" and "a PSTN teleconferencing subsystem" as well as "a PSTN telephone call" or "a PSTN-based telephone" and "a data network port," "a PSTN network input port" or "receiving calls from a calling party's PSTN telephone" represent new matter.

Applicants believe that since the telephones 26, 28 are connected to the teleconferencing system 24 via a PSTN network 16 (see Fig. 1), it is clear that the telephone is a PSTN-based telephone and the teleconferencing system is a PSTN-based teleconferencing system. Nevertheless, the claims have been amended to remove any reference to PSTN.

Additionally, Claims 1-6, 8, 10-11, and 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. More specifically, it was asserted in the Office Action that the limitation "directly coupled" is indefinite.

Applicants believe that a person skilled in the art would understand "directly coupled" means that there is no other network between the speech processing system and the teleconferencing system and between the speech processing system and the IM messaging system. It is noted that the data network as shown in Fig. 1 is optional (see

Specification, paragraph [0014]: "The device 12 can be directly coupled between the teleconferencing system 24 and the instant messaging system 22 or coupled between such systems via an optional data network 17 as shown."). Nevertheless, the word "directly" has been deleted to facilitate prosecution.

Applicants thus respectfully request that the claims rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs be withdrawn.

Claims Rejections – 35 USC § 102

In the Office Action, Claims 1-6, 8, 10-11, and 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application 2004/0003041 to Moore, *et al.* (hereinafter Moore).

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the claim rejections, Applicants have amended the claims so as to expedite prosecution of the present application. It is expressly noted, however, that the amendments should not be interpreted as the surrender of any subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully reserve the right to present the original version of any of the amended claims in any future divisional or continuation applications from the present application.

Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 8, and 18 to further emphasize certain aspects of the invention. As discussed herein, the claim amendments are fully supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by the claim amendments.

Aspects of Applicants Invention

It may be helpful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention prior to addressing the cited references. One embodiment of the invention, as typified by amended Claim 1, is a method for enabling phone users of a teleconferencing system to

participate in an instant messaging based conference managed by an instant messaging system.

The method can include providing a speech processing system coupled between the teleconferencing system and the messaging system. See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0014]; see also Fig. 1.

The method can also include receiving at the speech processing system a speech input received by the teleconferencing system from a telephone connected to the teleconferencing system, transcribing the speech input to a first text message using the speech processing system, transmitting the first text message to a plurality of devices participating in the instant messaging based conference, receiving at the speech processing system a second text message from any one among the plurality of devices participating in the instant messaging based conference, converting the second text message to a speech output, and transmitting the speech output to the telephone via the teleconferencing system. See, e.g., Specification, paragraphs [0017] and [0018]; see also Fig. 2.

The Claims Define Over the Cited References

Fig. 1 of Moore shows a communication system 10 including a data processing system 12 coupled by a communications network 20 to a service provider system 30 that provides chat-based services. The data processing system 12 may execute a chat client 14 as an application. The network 20 is also accessible by an IP telephone 92 or a conventional telephone 62. Moore's chat system including the data processing system 12, the network 20 (including IM service 22), and the service provider system 30 may appear to be comparable with the IM system including the IM devices (18, 20), the IM network (14), and the instant messaging system (22) according to the present invention. However, in contrast to Moore's chat system, in which the chat clients can communicate via a

variety of media including text, voice, images and video (see, e.g., paragraph [0075] of Moore), the IM devices (18, 20), the IM system according to the present invention can only communicate using instant messaging (see, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0013], "all participants are connected to an IM server over a data network").

The object of the present invention is to provide a system suited for augmenting voice (and text) chat over data transmission protocols (see, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0005]). In other words, the present invention provides a new technique for enhancing a real-time chat channel to enable telephone users to participate in an instant messaging conference (see, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0006]). Since Moore's system is already accessible by telephone users, the chat system of Moore is not really an IM system in the sense of the present invention. There is no need, and indeed it is impossible, for Moore to provide a method or system for enabling phone users to participate in an instant messaging based conference. This is so because there is no true instant messaging based conference system in Moore.

Also, Moore does not disclose a teleconferencing system. Although the IP telephone 92 or conventional telephone 62 may access the chat system, the IP telephone 92 or conventional telephone 62 is not connected to any teleconferencing system. Therefore, in Moore the intelligent media translator 70 is not bridging an IM system and a teleconferencing system, but rather is merely connected between a chat client and a telephone user.

It was asserted in the Office Action that the intelligent chat gateway 52 manages messaging communications among a plurality parties, which is equivalent to "a teleconferencing system." Applicants respectfully disagree. As can be seen from Fig. 1 of Moore, the intelligent chat gateway 52 is connected to the service provider system 30 and serves as an interface to the service provider system 30 (see paragraph [0093]).

Therefore, the intelligent chat gateway 52 is part of the chat system, not a teleconferencing system in the sense of the present invention.

Further, it is noted that in Moore the conventional telephony signal from the telephone 62 has to be converted by the VoIP gateway 54 into a packetized data stream suitable for transport through a packet data network, such as data transport network 20, before being received by the speech-to-text module 74 (see paragraph [0105]). In contrast, in the present invention, the speech input is received by the speech processing system directly from the teleconferencing system without being converted into a packetized data stream.

Accordingly, Moore fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of Claims 1, 8, and 18, as amended. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended Claims 1, 8, and 18 define over the prior art. Furthermore, as each of the remaining claims depends from Claim 1, 8, or 18 while reciting additional features, Applicants further respectfully submit that the remaining claims likewise define over the prior art.

Applicants thus respectfully request that the claims rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the

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Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

AKERMAN SENTERFITT

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